

**East Haddam  
Conservation Commission**

December 3, 2019

Adopted January 7, 2020

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Thursday, December 6, 2019, at 7:34 PM at the Municipal Office Building. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being present.

a. Roll Call

Rob Smith, Gary Wilson, Thom Delventhal, Marilyn Gleeson, Joe Zaid, Bernie Gillis, Sue Merrow, Charlotte Gelston

2. Appointment of Alternates

No alternates appointed as all members were present.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Ms. Gleeson to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Ms. Gelston and unanimously approved.

4. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 11/7/19

5b. removed second installed

5d. added trees to locust

8. Changed permanent to regular

Motion by Ms. Gleeson to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved. Ms. Gelston abstained.

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Stewardship and Forestry Management sub-committee: Mr. Wilson planted 5 ferns to replace the red ferns that didn't survive. For the other plants that remain to be planted, he planted them in such a manner to keep their roots wet and enable them to be moved relatively quickly in the spring.

Mr. Smith removed the 2x4s and 6x6s from the Rose Farm bridge site. He noted that beavers have built a dam just north of the bridge on the Humboldt property. Two birch trees have been felled by the beavers onto the bridge. Mr. Smith moved them off the bridge. There remains some sanding to be done as well as removing the remaining last bits of building material. That will be done once the weather is clear.

Mr. Smith noted that there could be beaver issues at Rose Farm in the future and the CC needs to discuss how to address.

Motion by Ms. Gleeson to postpone the beaver issue on Rose Farm to be discussed at a future meeting. Second by Ms. Merrow. The motion carried.

The first trail has been completed at Shugrue. The 2<sup>nd</sup> loop has been marked; Mr. Smith found 2 charcoal mounds (the trail runs thru one of them). The first section is 0.8 miles long and the 2<sup>nd</sup> loop will be just as long. This Sunday there will be a work party from 12-3 to continue to work on the 2<sup>nd</sup> loop trail.

Outreach and Promotion: The Rose Farm bridge was highlighted in the Events magazine, thanks to Ms. Merrow. She will write another article for the next Events magazine. She is thinking of writing on the historical part of town owned preserves, and may write an article on charcoal mounds.

Volunteer Activism: Nothing to report.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – The application for the Shugrue parking lot has been filed with IWWC and will be discussed at the IWWC’s next meeting. The IWWC has already looked at the property and site. Once approval is received, then the town crew can start to install the parking lot.

P&Z – Mr. Gillis noted that the only relevant point was the Eversource access to the Zeller property, which is on the agenda for this CC meeting.

c. ADA Path and plantings

Before Mr. Wilson planted the remaining plants, the next to last course for the path has to be put down. The 3 – 4 inches of screenings has not been put down yet. There is a plan to get that completed shortly. There will be a grand opening after the path is completed. There is still some additional work that must be done by the town crew to get it into great shape.

d. Update on Eagle Scout project(s)

Ms. Gleeson provided an update on Mr. Kerr’s project, who met with Mr. Smith and Ms. Gleeson and received signatures on his Adirondack chairs on 8, possibly 10, sites. The only site requiring a platform is the old dump site. Ms. Gleeson confirmed the locations with him. Mr. Kerr is now going to start his fundraising. Ms. Gleeson suggested that the CC consider using these as a way to get the public more involved in visiting sites, and can also be a project the CC continues on other properties. Mr. Smith noted that the only place the CC will need to be involved is the old dump site where the platform is needed. The platform would be 16x20 feet in size, with a roof to be installed later on. Mr. Kerr found a place that provides the combo chair at less cost than previously thought.

Mr. Behilo provided an update on his project on Davison. He has posted a large sign within the kiosk at the start of the trail (at the gate). He will have the project substantially complete in time for the January CC meeting. There will be a “grand opening” sometime in the spring. Both Eagle Scout projects are going very well.

e. Status of Rose Farm Bridge

Already discussed under the Stewardship updates.

6. New Business

a. New bills

No bills this month to process.

b. Budget discussion

Mr. Smith provided an update on the budget. There is not a capital budget as what the CC typically requests does not typically get paid for out of a capital account. There is a non-lapsing fund that goes along with the forestry management program. Mr. Smith noted that the CC has requested about \$5,000 each year. The non-lapsing funding has about \$17,000 as the balance. The goal is to keep the money there to fund additional projects. The question to the group is if the CC continues with its fund request this budget year for \$24,000. Mr. Smith suggested dropping the request down to \$15,000 as that seems to be what has been used year over year.

Discussion ensued around the different areas of the budget and what should be requested. The group would like to increase the Community Events from \$200 to \$400. Ms. Gelston will ask Mr. Gelston how much their golf cart cost, as that may be something the CC needs to consider for bringing materials to work sites, which would be an increase to Other Supplies.

Conferences will be doubled from \$100 to \$200. There are several surveys needed on a number of properties. Mr. Smith will talk with Cindy Varrochio to determine how to handle the survey needs.

Mr. Smith will ask Cindy Varrochio to provide a more detailed breakdown for the budget to show where monies were spent. Mr. Zaid asked for 2 years of detailed breakdown. This will help the CC determine what to request for the upcoming budget request. Mr. Smith asked the CC members to send him any thoughts about what is needed for budget going forward.

c. Eversource easement request for Roaring Brook

Mr. Smith provided an update on the Eversource request for an easement for permanent access to its existing right of way within Roaring Brook. There is already an existing access trail, but Eversource must request access to use it as there is not a permanent easement.

Discussion ensued, however the general sense of the CC members is that this easement should not be made permanent. Ms. Merrow noted that the CC needs to see the full document as there are missing sections. Mr. Smith will find the full document and forward for the review. There is a January 28<sup>th</sup> P&Z Public Hearing on this issue.

Motion by Ms. Gleeson that the CC recommend the Town not grant a permanent access road easement to Eversource on Roaring Brook. Eversource cannot expand the current easement nor relocate it, thereby leaving the existing temporary easement intact. Second by Mr. Zaid and unanimously approved.

d. Potential names for “the old dump site”

The site overlooks the Salmon River. The name “Salmon River Overlook” was suggested but no decision has been made. Postponed to the next meeting.

e. Public Comment

No comment as no public attended this meeting.

7. Next meeting – January 7, at Meeting Room #1, Municipal Office Building.

8. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Zaid has parts for 3 kiosks which can be installed at Sabine, Lena and Urbanik.

Mr. Smith received the license request from the home owner for a dock expansion on the island between Chapman Pond and the CT River. The dock is in the CT River, not in the pond. The CC has been notified because in many towns the CC is part of the IWWC, so it is a point of information related to wetland and watercourses.

The CC has received an application from Susan Pagnano, to join the CC. She worked with Mr. Wilson on the ADA path.

Motion by Ms. Gelston to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to approve Susan Pagnano's application to join the CC as an alternate member. Second by Mr. Zaid, unanimously approved.

Mr. Smith will be resigning in 2 weeks and will not be leading the next meeting. A new chair is needed to run the CC. Two nominations were received for a new chair to replace Mr. Smith.

Motion by Ms. Merrow to nominate Ms. Gleeson to replace Mr. Smith as Conservation Commission chair. Second by Ms. Gelston.

Motion by Mr. Wilson to nominate Mr. Zaid to replace Mr. Smith as Conservation Commission chair. No second, nomination withdrawn.

Voting on Ms. Gleeson nomination ensued, motion carried.

With Mr. Smith's resignation, there is an open regular position for an alternate to move to become a regular member – the 2 alternates are Mr. Delventhal or Mr. Gillis. Ms. Gleeson nominated Mr. Gillis to be recommended to the Board of Selectmen to become a regular member. Mr. Wilson seconded, unanimously approved.

The CC thanked Mr. Smith for all his hard work and focus over the years.

Mr. Wilson has completed the DEEP wildlife conservationist course and will be looking for 40 hours of community service related to wildlife promotion.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shannon A. Goyette  
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- Former Zeller Property – Roaring Brook Preserve map
- DEEP License #: 201813429-SDF Island between Chapman Pond and CT River, East Haddam
- Susan Pagnano's application to join the Conservation Commission
- General Government: Conservation Commission

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- Fees collected/charges for services
- General Government: Conservation Commission Service Narrative